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PAWNEE STAR LORE.

THE Ski-di, one of the four bands composing the Pawnee tribe of Indians as it is known to-day, trace their origin and organization to the stars, and most of their ceremonies are connected with this definite belief. As a result, the rites are necessarily limited in their scope, and this limitation has left an impress upon the people who not only took part in the ceremonies, but relied upon them for personal and tribal welfare. The fact that for numberless generations the thought and attention of the entire community have been directed toward a special aspect of nature, the firmament with its stars, clouds, and winds, renders the Ski-di an unusually interesting field for the comparison of the lore of the people with the lore of the priests.

While the data at present in hand are insufficient for a final comparison of these lores, yet the material already secured, a part of which is here presented, clearly points to their interacting influence, and may be of interest to students of folk-lore.

The dual forces, male and female, had, according to the Ski-di rituals, their places in the heavens. The west was female, the east was male. The source of all life, the power which permeated all forms, dwelt in the zenith, in "the silence of the blue sky, above and beyond all clouds." This central power, whose abode was where the east and west conjoined, could not be seen or heard or felt by man, and yet it was to this power that man must address his wants. Ti-ra-wa was the name of this power in common use by the people and in the public ceremonies. The old and venerable men, the leaders in the sacred rites, called this power "A-ti-us Ti-ra kit-ta-ko" (A-ti-us, "father;" Ti-ra, a part of Ti-ra-wa, "the highest power;" ki-ta, "above;" ko, a part of ti-ko, "sitting;" "Father Ti-ra-wa sitting above"). This name, I was told, "must be uttered in the lowest of tones or in a whisper." The priest explained: "That the mysterious being who instructed our fathers said, that this is the name by which men must think of the highest power, and when one takes his child aside, and teaches it quietly, then, too, he must think of this power as Ti-ra-wa father sitting above."

Ti-ra-wa approached man through the lesser or under powers which were called "Ti-ra-wa-wa-ri-ki-u-ra-wi'-hi-ri" (Ti-ra-wa, "power;" wa-ri-ki, "standing;" u-ra, a part of hu-ra-ru, "earth, ground;" wi'-hi-ri, "touching.") The word implies that these powers are standing below or under the highest power, which sits above, and are able to move and to touch, to come in contact with the earth, here spoken of by the term which signifies its life-giving power. The term in common use for the dwelling-place of all the powers above, the highest as well as the under powers, was Ti-ra-wa-hut.

Many of the under powers, those which can come near to man and be seen, heard, or felt by him, were believed to dwell in particular stars. Several of these stars had their shrines in certain villages, and had also bestowed the sacred objects kept within the shrines, authorized the ceremonies connected with them, and inaugurated a priesthood.

It is a current belief among the people, and, as they say, "it often happens that when a person goes out on the hills at night to fast and to pray to the powers above, he will, as he is praying, become conscious that a particular star is looking at him. Then he will have a vision from that star, and the star will have control of his life." Sometimes the effect of a star was disastrous. For instance: "A lad was made crazy by a star. His friends sent for a doctor, and when he came, he waited for the star to rise which had caused the trouble. As soon as it was discerned above the horizon, the doctor took the lad out under the open sky, painted his body black with white spots, wrapped a fawn skin, which had still the spots upon it, about the boy, and then painted a star on his forehead. As long as the painted star remained on his forehead, the youth was sane, but when it wore off, he became crazy again."

A certain star in the west, which cannot now be designated, was believed to be the abode of the potential female element. The ceremonies of the shrine of this star led in the series of yearly ceremonies which culminated with the rites belonging to the red morning star. We are told that "there are two morning stars, brothers; the elder is red, and it is he to whom the human sacrifice is made; the younger is white, he is kind, and does not share in these rites." Some of the rituals speak of the red morning star as "a man, who stands facing the west. His body is red, and the right side of his face, that is, the side toward the north, is painted black, the left side, toward the south, is painted red. The downy, 'breathing' (as it is called) feather is tinged with red, and tied to his hair over the coronal suture. He wears his robe in the sacred manner, with hair outside. His arms are crossed over his breast, his hands closed, and grasped in the right hand is a club."

The people say that "once when a man was with a war party, he lay on the top of a mountain. (The place is sometimes designated as one of the Wichita mountains.) He heard a voice telling him not to go away, for he was at the place where the stars passed. The stars are people. As he lay there, he saw them file by, all going from the east to the west. At the last came a great warrior, painted red, carrying a club in his folded arms, and having on his head a downy feather, painted red. This was the red morning star."

This morning star is called Ho-pi-ri-ku-tsu. The word is made

from ho-pi-rit, "star;" ko-ri-tu, "fire;" and ku-tzu, "large, great, mighty." The name signifies "the mighty star of fire."

The person to be sacrificed to the morning star was considered as having no future, as no longer belonging to the living. From the time of dedication to the star until the actual sacrifice of the life took place, the victim belonged to the star-god, was kept in seclusion, and not permitted to be touched by the people.

This fact was known even to the children, who, when they wished to ostracise a playmate, would cry "Pi-ra ho-pi-ri-ku-tzu!" ("child set apart to the morning star").

There is a story told of the use of a like term which turned the tide of war: —

"In a time of scarcity of game, the Ski-di secured an abundance by means of a ceremony connected with the shrine of the star in the west. This aroused the ire of one of the other bands of the Pawnee, and a plan was made to kill the priest who had so much power, so that the Ski-di should not fare any better than the rest of the tribe. This plan was carried out, and the Ski-di was aroused to war upon the band which had killed the priest. In the fight a Ski-di warrior pointed to the leader of the offending band, and shouted the words that dedicated him to the morning star. Instantly the man ceased fighting, and pleaded for his life; he begged that he might be killed at once, but no one would listen. Then he appealed to his own party, but they fled from him in fear, leaving the field to the Ski-di, in seeking to escape from the man thus dedicated to sacrifice, for he no longer belonged to the living."

The rituals state that the first human beings were borne to the earth from the star of the west by the wind.

The people say, "When a child is born during the night, the relatives take notice of the stars. If the wind does not blow, and the next day is clear, then the parents are assured that the child will probably live without sickness or trouble."

The ancient instructor of the priests said, "The wind, hu-tu-ru, would divide, and there would be places where the different winds would dwell." This statement does not refer to the four winds which guard the paths at the four quarters down which the lesser powers descend to man.

There are seven winds, each of which has its name and peculiar function: —

The east wind, hu-tu-ru-ha-wit (hu-tu-ru, "wind;" ha-wit, the sacred name for east, the meaning lost). This is the wind which comes with the dawn; "it brings life to the body, but it does not bring help to the spirit."

The west wind, hu-tu-ru-wa-rux-ti (hu-tu-ru, "wind;" wa-rux-ti, "mysterious, wonderful!"). "This wind comes from the mysterious being to whom Ti-ra-wa gave power to put life into all things, to have direct communication with man, and to direct his life." "In the west are the powers which bring rain to cool and vivify the earth, in the west we hear the thunders sound; there dwell the powers which carry out the commands of Ti-ra-wa. Because of this, we call the wind sent from this power, hu-tu-ru-wa-rux-ti."

North wind, hu-tu-ru-ru-chow-wi-ri-ki (hu-tu-ru, "wind;" ru-chow-wi, "placed permanently;" ri-ki, "standing"). From the character of the name of this wind it would seem to be connected with the north star, ho-pi-ri-ka-ra-wi′-wa-ri, "the star that does not move." This star is one of the lesser powers, and was made a chief. "Ti-ra-wa told this chief that he was always to stand there, where he was placed, and to watch the earth." "This Le-cha-ru, chief, must not move, for if he should do so, all the other stars, as they pass over the heavens, would become confused, and know not which way to go."

The wind of the spirits, Hu-tu-ri′-kot-tsa-ru (hu-tu, a part of hu-tu-ru, "wind;" ri-kot-tsa-ru, "a shadowy image of a person, a ghost"). "This wind takes the spirits of the dead from the north, from some star in the north to which the dead immediately pass from the earth, and blows or drives the ghosts along the way, to the star at the southern end of the path." The Milky Way is called ru-ha-ru′-tu-ru-hut (ru-ha, "bright, light;" ru, first syllable of ru-hut, "a long stretch;" tu-ru, a part of hu-tu-ru, "wind;" hut, the last syllable of ru-hut, "a long stretch," as across the heavens). "The Milky Way is the path taken by the spirits as they pass along, driven by the wind which starts at the north, to the star in the south, at the end of the way." This star is named ho-pi-ri-ka′-hu-ri-ri-wi-si-su (ho-pi-ri, a modification of ho-pi-rit, "star;" ka-ru, a part of ka-ru-ra, "the earth, as the dwelling-place of man;" ri-ri-wi-si-su, "midway from east to west"). The word tells that the star is the dwelling-place of those who once lived on the earth, and that its length is east and west, it being narrow in width, north and south. "As most people linger in their death through sickness, so the path they tread is the long path we see across the sky, while the short path (the short fork of the Milky Way) is the path made by those whose life is cut short by sudden death, as in battle."

South wind, Ra-ri-tu-ru. This wind comes from the star in the south where the spirits of the dead dwell. It is connected with the Milky Way and with the wind that drives the spirits of the dead to the south star. "This wind accumulates at the south, and our ancestors were told (so the priest said) that some day this wind will

rise up in the south, and make its way back to the north, doing much damage as it goes. When this shall come to pass, the people must remember that this wind has come from the place where the dead dwell, and as they see it coming, they must show it respect and offer it tobacco."

"In the old days we (the Pawnee) did not know cyclones; but when we came to know them, we called them Ra-ri-tu-ru. We remembered what we had been told of the return of the south wind from the star of the dead, and we offered tobacco." "We Pawnee always do this, and it is wonderful to see how the cloud will rise and go off in another direction, and the people escape all harm." The modern name for the south wind is where the sun goes.

Hu-tu-ru-ka'-wa-ha-ru is the wind that sends the game. This wind comes from one of "two stars that are close together, and are back of the north star, nearer to the horizon toward the east." The name Ka'-wa-ha-ru occurs in the rituals, and seems to be a personification of the attribute of willingness to give.

Among the people, "when a man is about to shoot at game, he will call upon ka'-wa-ha-ru to give the game to him, to make his shot successful." "A woman will call upon this power to help her husband when he is hunting." "A little boy, when he is learning to use the bow and arrow, calls upon ka'-wa-ha-ru to give him good fortune." "When a person is successful in any matter, secures that which he desires, particularly when hunting, he says by way of thanks, "Hu-tu-ru-ka'-wa-ha-ru-u-ti-kis!" U-ti-kis is that which assists in time of need. "A man sometimes uses this term toward his son, as implying one upon whose assistance the father can depend."

Hu-tu-ru-hi'-hus-su is the wind that drives. This wind comes from the other of the two stars that are back of the north star (hu-tu-ru, "wind;" hi'-kus-su, "the sudden expelling of breath"). This wind is associated with the wind which sends the game, hu-tu-ru-ka'-wa-ha-ru, "it drives the animals toward the camp, so that the people can secure the game given them by ka'-wa-ha-ru." When the people have secured the game, that has been thus driven toward their camp, they give thanks to this wind by saying: "Na-wa-i-ri Ti-wa-chi-riks hu-tu-ru-hi'-kus-su!" (Na-wa-i-ri, "we give thanks;" ti-wa-chi-riks, "uncle;" hu-tu-ru-hi'-kus-su, "wind that drives").

The constellation Corona borealis is said to be "a council of chiefs, and the star in the centre of the circle, the servant cooking over the fire, preparing the feast."

Ursa Major represents four men carrying a sick or dead man, and Ursa Minor, "four persons carrying a sick baby." In reference to these groups of stars I was told: "The people took their way of liv-

ing from the stars, so they must carry their sick or their dead as shown, the mourners following."

Various animals are seen in the skies. The rabbit is a group east of the lower end of the Milky Way; a bird's foot is discerned on the path itself. To the south and near the galaxy is a cluster called the bear. In the south toward the east is a bright star; this is the head of the serpent; many little stars are to be seen on its body, which lies close to the horizon. Farther north, in the east are three deer, one following the other. The bow is to be seen among the stars, but "it is difficult to locate."

The notion that rewards and punishments are meted out to men at their death, the good being transported to the stars, and the bad, as in one instance, turned to stone, are importations from the white race. Many of these ideas have been spread by means of the ghost dance, and already the fancy of the folk has crystallized about these new ideas; but these modern bits are easily distinguished from the lore that has its roots in the native mind.

Alice C. Fletcher.